

Cardinal Compositions

University of Louisville

Always Ask Your Grandkids Before You Post ([Video Essay](#))

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For the Classroom

This video essay creates a humorous scenario where an older person uses incorrect internet speak in order to express her condolences for a loved one's death. The video demonstrates the dramatic consequences of not understanding appropriate language for social media.

For a short in-class activity, try recreating similar rhetorical situations for your students:

1. Split students into five groups, and give each group a different "ethos" or identity to take on. They could be a PR firm, the president, a private citizen, a news reporter, or a comedian.
2. Then, give the class an "exigence" or situation that requires a public response. To make it more interesting, use a current event that has been in the news recently.
3. Each group will have to create a socially appropriate response using the social media platform of their choice. They will have to think of affordances, constraints, and disadvantages of each platform.
4. After they come up with a response, they will present it to the class.

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Computer-automated female narrator: This is Granny.

[happy, upbeat music plays]

She is old.

And this is her husband, Joe.

They've been married for years.

Granny just got a Facebook.

One day, she is scrolling through Facebook and finds out Joe's Aunt Linda died.

She sees everyone leaving their condolences, and she wants to leave hers, too.

She thinks back to what her grandson said about internet language to try to express her condolences on Facebook appropriately.

She thinks of the best way to express her condolences.

She decided to go with, "lol," which means, "lots of love" and a crying emoji.

Granny went to sleep that night and woke up the next morning.

Joe had all of his things packed up in bags. He told Granny, "We are done!" and drove away with all of his things.

Granny was sad and confused. She called her grandson to tell him what had happened.

Her grandson said it was because she laughed at Aunt Linda's death and informed her that "lol" means "laugh out loud."

[sound of record player coming to an abrupt stop]

Then she used a laughing emoji instead of a crying emoji.

[sad piano music plays]

But it was too late. Joe had left her. And she had already laughed at Aunt Linda's death by accident.

So, Granny learned to always ask your grandkids what internet language means before you post it to Facebook.

The End.

[ends]